The PULPIT

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

AUGUST 1945

HOLBROOK LIBRARY PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

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Sermon Illustrations

Contributed by Readers of THE PULPIT

The Light of the Bible

The Bible contains the major message that God wishes to deliver to humanity and when that message has been listened to marvelous progress has been made. When men have failed to listen to that message, tragedy awaited them. William Lloyd Garison said: "Take away the Bible from us and our warfare against intemperance, impurity, oppression, infidelity and crime is at an end." James Russell Lowell said: "Show me a place on this planet ten miles square where a man may live in decency, comfort and security, supporting and educating his children, a place where age is reverenced, infancy respected, womanhood honored, and human life held in due regard, and I will show you a place where the gospel has gone before and laid the foundation."

A brief scanning of the world reveals how true these statements prove to be. Why is it that Africa is called "The Dark Continent"? It is not because the people are largely of the colored race. Any area of the earth is a dark spot if its people are living in ignorance and violation of the laws of God. The light that shines in those dark spots is in exact proportion to their knowledge and practice of the fundamental facts of ethics, morals and religion that are revealed in the Bible.—*D. Earl Daniel, First Presbyterian Church, Holyoke, Mass.*

Redemptive Value of Suffering

Thousands of people today are discovering the redemptive value of the sacrifices this war is causing them to make. One of the problem boys of our Sunday school (just a few years ago) writes from somewhere in Germany unburdening his heart about his spiritual experiences. Part of what he writes is about the deepening of his own faith. God was very near to him through months of bitter fighting and his life has been spared to the present. Now he is back in a hospital, incapacitated to a certain extent, but his thought is not for himself—except thankfulness to God—but for his "gang" of which he was their staff sergeant. He writes to ask prayers for them, that they may come through without having to give up their lives. He is with them in thought, they are on his heart, they are in his prayers, and there is a certain redemptive process taking place in his life because of all this. Nothing can so cleanse the heart and make it Godlike as to take the sufferings of others and make them one's own. "It is the way the Master went; should not the servant tread it still?"—*Harold G. Gaunt, Olivet Presbyterian Church, Atlantic City, N. J.*

No Race Prejudice

In his book, *Against the Current,* Dr. E. A. Steiner tells of how he was the victim of considerable race prejudice during his boyhood. People called him everything from a "little Jew" to "Christ-killer." But two people did not share this hatred with their fellow townsman. One was an angelic character, the daughter of the local miller, who was very kind to him. When she lay dying, he was called in to see her. Afterward he stood on the street sobbing and a woman of bad reputation came along and kissed him on the forehead as she asked: "Little boy, why are you crying?" He concludes: "The very good and the very bad have no race prejudice."—*Dewey R. Eder, First Evangelical Church, Naperville, Ill.*

'If It Be Possible . . . Nevertheless'

Early this year the *Christian Advocate* reported the true story of what happened in Judy's home. Thirteen-year-old Judy sat in a church school class and listened to some other girls talking about prayer—of how they prayed for God to bring their brothers safely home, and of how these same girls claimed that they couldn't go on believing in God unless he did so.

"It didn't work out that way at our house," said Judy. "You see, my brother was in the army—a flyer—and every day daddy and mother and I prayed that he might be kept safe. But we didn't stop there. Daddy used to add: 'And, O God, if anything happens that he can't come back, give us what we will need when that time comes.'"

Well, that time came. When the fateful telegram arrived at mealtime one day, that father sat down and prayed: "O God, Our Father, we've prayed for him a good many times, and we've prayed that if we got a telegram like this we would have what we need, and now, dear Lord, we need it. We are depending on Thee. Show us the way and we'll do it. Amen."

The rest of Judy's story to the class had to do with the way on thing after another was done "fo Leland." Leland was "over there and couldn't do his earthly work an more, so the family decided to do i for him. The father took Leland' class in the Y.M.C.A.; Judy starte doing something she had always hate to do—she started making her ow bed and cleaning up her room "s Mother could be released for mor Red Cross work, as Leland woul want her to do." It was amazin how much extra work these thre dear people did "for Leland" an how they felt strengthened and up held by their Heavenly Father. The had a faith that reached "beyond th skyline," and thus their beloved Le land's untimely death resulted i good, to themselves and to man others.

The only prayer that any of u should dare to pray is Jesus' ow prayer in Gethsemane: "Father, if i be possible . . . nevertheless."—*L. L Dunnington, First Methodist Church Mason City, Iowa.*

When Russian Soldiers Pray

The following prayer was foun among the possessions of a group o Russian soldiers who had been take prisoners:

"Thou silent light, redeemer of th world, who art encircling the whol earth with thy love, we hear th prayer from the cross: Father, for give them. In the name of all-forgiv ing love, we ask our Father in heave to grant his and our enemies eterna peace. Lord, forgive those who ar shedding innocent blood, and causin us untold suffering, advancing at th cost of their brothers' agony. Lor judge not those who persecute us. Le our prayer help on the work of recon ciliation among those whom our feebl witness to our faith stimulated t opposition to Christianity."

The Transforming Gospel

A Chinese, having begun to read copy of the Bible that had come int his possession, reported how his atti tude had been changed after he ha read the fifth, sixth and seven chapters of the Gospel of Matthew "I can never again look at a perso as I looked at him before," he said "whether he be my servant, rickshaw coolie, a foreigner, a stranger o even a Japanese who is attacking m country. I cannot but see the sacred ness in every one of them—the ti that makes them my brothers."

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The Pulpit

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, *Editor*

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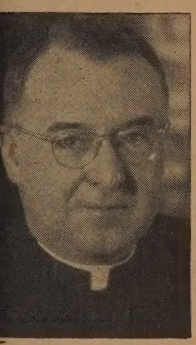
Religion and the University Graduate

BY VINCENT J. FLYNN

HAVE chosen to speak to you on the subject, "Religion and the University Graduate." I picked this bject after some deliberation. When the University thorities* invited me to speak to you, I asked myself iat I might say that would interest this graduating class. This is a state university, and the class is composed of representatives from, I presume, nearly all of the racial, religious, social and political ranks in the state, and some outside the state. I am a clergyman of a particular denomination. I am also head of a small college and of a large military school. I am an ex-professor of English. What, in all conscience, might a Catholic priest, head of a small college and of a military



ademy, formerly a professor of English, say to a aduating class of a large university, a class composed all sorts of people? Some people dislike clergymen; ers cannot abide college presidents; others are bitly opposed, if not to English teachers, at least to glish grammar and rhetoric.

As one who has spent most of his mature life in leges and universities, I have certain definite views education. As a priest of the Catholic Church, I ve certain definite views on religion. As a student the English literature of the Renaissance, I have quired a certain acquaintance with that field. I have ig leaned to the theory that a speaker should speak a subject about which he knows something; that ling, about a subject in which he has an interest. I y confess that I am no great authority on either edution or religion, and that I am rapidly losing whater standing I had in the field of Renaissance literare; but I do admit that I have a very great interest all three; and if I have anything to say at all worth tening to, it should be about one of these three subcts. Now, of these three fields, I have chosen religion, cause I believe it to be the most important. All owledge is valuable; I am therefore interested in the nutest fact about Shakespeare. Education, dealing as does with the proper formation of the most valuable eature on earth, a human being, is of even greater interest to me; but religion, which is essentially the study of the very heart of reality, is to me the subject which must come first in the order of importance.

*This address was delivered at the commencement exercises the University of Minnesota.

LIFE ROBBED OF SIGNIFICANCE

Knowledge is important, but wisdom is more important. It is important to know who discovered America, what water is made of, and why apples fall from trees. But, I submit, it is more important to know the essential nature of man and the universe—to know what man is, his origin and destiny; to know where he fits in the vast scale of being; to know whether man and the universe are responsible to a Supreme Being or not; to know what constitutes proper conduct for man.

At this point someone will say: "Yes, of course; what you say is true; the questions you put are the vital ones; but by their nature they are unanswerable, insoluble, by this poor creature, man." This, I venture to say, leaves us with a pretty bleak outlook. It is a defeatist view; it robs life of any real significance. The quest for the essential truth about the universe is admittedly hard; but I should think that any serious man would search all his life before giving up on such an important matter. Perhaps he cannot possess the whole truth; but a fragment of that truth, a partial view, a fleeting glimpse, even, would seem to be worth any amount of trouble. It is a well known fact, however, that many have given up the search for ultimate religious truth and called themselves agnostics or atheists. This is particularly true of our own day, coincident with, and perhaps owing partly to, the widespread interest in the physical and biological sciences, and the great advances made in these fields. The consequent absorption in the natural has tended to turn man's attention from the supernatural. The chief cause, however, of the recent spread of agnosticism is, to all appearances, the breakup in the unity of Western thought.

As far back as history goes, we find examples of agnosticism, if not of atheism. But the number of non-believers was never very large. Even today, the number of non-believers is only a tiny fraction of the great mass of humanity. But it is a fact, nevertheless, that in our Western world religion has been losing its hold on people in the last two or three generations.

THE BLIGHT OF MATERIALISM

In giving up religion, men have, for the most part, adopted a philosophy of materialism; that is, a belief that there is no such thing as the spiritual—that everything is material. Men have likewise given up their belief in the moral law—in an absolute standard of right and wrong. They have said that what we call right and wrong is not a matter of principle but a matter of utility, of expedience, or of custom. In taking

their stand on this ground, men have paid a terrible price; for it is becoming increasingly clear that in giving up religion we give up any right to talk about such things as the dignity of a human being, right and wrong, democracy, freedom, toleration, war guilt, war criminals. I do not say that every agnostic is a foe to the dignity of human beings, to democracy, to freedom, to toleration; that he has no conception of right and wrong or of guilt and of innocence; but I do say that when he has thrown away his religion, he has thrown away his only real ground for having an opinion on these subjects.

If there is no absolute law-giver, what becomes of law? If you say that the ultimate basis of right and wrong is custom, or utility, or expedience, you do not necessarily make *your* utility, or *your* expediency, or *your* notion of what a custom should be the basis of all your action. But you will be perfectly logical if you do so. Most human beings are too fundamentally decent or are still so thoroughly under the spell of the believing atmosphere of their childhood—or of the world's childhood—ever to carry into practice the conclusions of these premises. But when men like Hitler and Mussolini and Stalin come along, and, acting on these same principles, form totalitarian states, making those states supreme over individuals, exterminating individuals and nations, the person who does not believe in God or in right and wrong has no grounds for objecting. Why should not Hitler, spurning toleration, deprive peoples of their freedom and even of their lives if it will be to his advantage? Similarly, why should not a business man lie and steal, coerce and murder, if it will help him to amass a fortune?

MEN ARE CHILDREN OF GOD

If man has any dignity, it is because he is a child of God. If man has any rights, it is because he is a child of God. If there is such a thing as guilt, it is because some things are right and some things are wrong. If the concept of democracy has any validity, the concept that peoples should rule themselves, it is because—in the words to which we so often pay lip-service—men were created free and equal.

You see the terrible confusion that has resulted because a few ruthlessly logical non-believers were able to put their ideas into effect; we have the whole world in turmoil today. For thousands of years the world got along, for the most part, on the theory that there was a Supreme Being, all just, all good, all powerful; that man was created to live forever; that he will be rewarded for his good deeds and punished for his bad ones. This view of life was held alike by Jews and Christians and Mohammedans. Even the pagans believed in some kind of god or gods, and in some sort of future life; and they believed in a moral law. But it was left for this enlightened era to produce a generation of bright young men who emancipated themselves from superstition, who overthrew timeworn formulas, who discarded outworn dogmas. These bright young men—brighter than Plato and Aristotle, brighter than Paul and Augustine, brighter than Thomas Aquinas and Abelard, brighter than Thomas More and Erasmus and John Colet, brighter even than Martin Luther and John Calvin, brighter than Samuel Johnson and Alexander Pope, brighter than John Ruskin and John Henry Newman—these bright young men, who saw their way clear where others had stumbled darkly, gave us first totalitarianism and then total war.

THE LIMITATIONS OF SCIENCE

There is no good in our saying that science has advanced so far since the days of Plato and Erasmus and even of Newman, that it has taught us the unreasonableness of belief. No matter how far the natural sciences advance, they can never teach that belief is either reasonable or unreasonable. The two are in quite separate fields. Science works by observation and experiment. The scientist says: "I mixed mud and molasses, let it boil, and observed such and such a result." He never says: "This proves that mud and molasses came into being at the command of a creator." He hardly ever says, "This proves that there is no God." No matter how much science learns about the universe, it can never attempt to answer such questions as, Where did it come from? Was it always there? Is there an activating Intelligence behind it or not?

The point is that such questions are answered by hard study and thinking. This method requires no laboratories, no apparatus except intelligence. Aristotle therefore, and Augustine, if they had comparable intellectual equipment, were as well able to investigate these problems as are any of us today. No doubt the world is at present full of intellectual giants, but most of us have still some lingering respect for the mental capacities of the great pagans, the great prophets of the Old Testament, and the great Christian Fathers.

IS THEISM A DREAM?

In the light of our present miserable state, I wonder whether the time has not come for us to re-examine the grounds of belief. You will sometimes hear it said that theism is a beautiful dream; that it is a pity that it cannot be true. Well, if it cannot be true, it is indeed a pity, if you wish to make any sense out of reality at all; if the reality is simply the wretched condition of mankind that we have today, or even a condition which is a shade less miserable, why continue to propagate the race? If this life is the be-all and end-all, for the most part of humanity it is very questionable whether the game is worth the candle. Even in the so-called "normal times" the amount of misery in the world is appalling. If you doubt it, talk to your doctor; talk to a clergyman; talk to a judge in the law courts; talk to any man or woman who has passed his middle age. Is it, after all, antecedently improbable that there is more to man than his body and mind; that there is more to existence than the present life; that there is more to reality than what we see?

It is true of course that no argument is as weak as the argument from authority, but it is likewise true that a humble respect for the opinions of others is the beginning of wisdom. There is no folly like the folly of the proud man, who summarily rejects the opinion

f others; there is no folly like that of the modern who espises the ancients simply because they are ancients. verybody recognizes the great advances in matters chnological made by our age. But few would have ie effrontery to maintain that we are a nobler race oday than were our forbears. Is not the matter of fficient importance that we ought once more to ask irselves whether we have not been hasty in rejecting ie view of life held by Shakespeare and Milton, by Iewton and Pasteur, by Washington, Jefferson and incoln? Is it not possible that a swollen pride has linded our eyes to the truth?

A DILEMMA FOR THE UNBELIEVER

There are many arguments for the existence of God, r the existence of the human soul, for the immortal- y of that soul, for the moral law. Time does not ermit me to enter into even a mere recital of these rguments. If you are serious, if you wish to endeavor weigh these arguments once more, any priest, any inister or any rabbi can show you where to find them t forth. There is one argument, however, for the xistence of God which presents the non-believer with dreadful dilemma. He either believes in God or ops believing in the validity of human thought. The rgument is presented in laymen's language by a recent nvert from atheism to Anglicanism, Mr. C. S. Lewis, llow and tutor of Magdalen College, Oxford.

In his recent book, *The Case for Christianity,* Mr. ewis says: "There are all sorts of different reasons r believing in God, and here I'll mention only one. t is this. Supposing there were no intelligence behind ie universe, no creative mind. In that case nobody esigned my brain for the purpose of thinking. It is ierely that when the atoms inside my skull happen for hysical or chemical reasons to arrange themselves in certain way, this gives me, as a by-product, the sensa- on I call thought. But if so, how can I trust my wn thinking to be true? It's like upsetting a milk-jug nd hoping that the way the splash arranges itself will ive you a map of London. But if I can't trust my wn thinking, of course I can't trust the arguments eading to atheism, and therefore have no reason to be n atheist, or anything else. Unless I believe in God, can't believe in thought: so I can never use thought disbelieve in God."

SENSE AND REASON

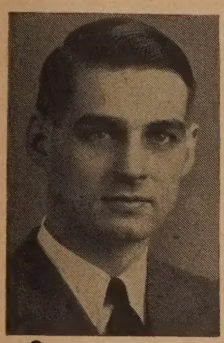
This is a sample of the arguments that you must xamine if you wish to give the case for the super- atural a hearing. By its very nature, this case cannot e decided upon the evidence of one's senses. Nobody ver claimed that God could be seen with human eyes, r weighed or measured by human instruments. But you have faith in reason, you may be willing to set our reason to work upon a problem of such utter gnificance as this one. Your reason will not tell you s much about the nature of God as scientific analysis ill tell you about the nature of the potato. But in iew of the importance of this question of God and of an, it is difficult, I make bold to assert, to justify a ack of concern in the answer.

As you young men and women leave these halls tonight, you go forth with the congratulations and best wishes of your friends here assembled. The University hopes that you will develop into the fine citizens our country needs. It is my prayer that this development will include your spiritual growth, to the end that you achieve the fullness of being planned for you by your Creator.

Short Cuts

By Irvin E. Lunger

AMERICANS are impatient. Everyone seems to be aware of it but the Americans themselves. Europeans know it and wonder about it. Orientals acknowledge it with an understanding smile. Our neighbors to the south see it and betray their irritation over it. We alone appear to be oblivious to it.



In certain respects our impatience is one of our virtues. It drives us to seek better ways of doing things. It causes us to invent new and more efficient machines, to develop faster methods and more practical techniques. It has, in fact, contributed much to technological advance.

It has been, on the other hand, one of our vices. Our lack of patience has kept us from many a promised land. It has caused us to put a high premium on short cuts—and not infrequently to our own detriment and disadvantage. Our glorification of short cuts has led us into many a blind alley.

I

We are impatient for good health. Our impatience in this realm has made us easy prey for all manner of clever advertisers and profiteers. The millions of dollars the American public spends each year for "miracle drugs" and "amazing discoveries" staggers the imagination. Competent physicians tell us that many of these highly advertised medicinal short cuts are worthless. Not a few are actually injurious to health unless taken under doctor's orders. At best, they are aids to health and should be so considered.

Vitamins are among the most recent medical discoveries to be exploited. When prescribed by a doctor, vitamin pills contribute to health. However, a pawn of promoters, they have been pictured as a "must" for health. The American public, uncertain which vitamin is best, has gone in for tablets which are purported to contain them all. The vitamin industry has prospered. Whether the health of America has improved is a debatable matter.

No one will deny that there are short cuts from illness to health. Neither will men argue that there are no medicines which reinforce health. However,

our eagerness for short cuts to health has caused many to lose sight of the fact that good health comes with proper rest and balanced diet, with regular exercise and proper care. It is a fruit of patience rather than a by-product of impatience.

Americans are among the healthiest people in the world. The credit goes not to our fads but to our wider access to proper food, to the popularity of physical exercise and the sanity of dress, and to the growing understanding of the rules of good health.

II

We are impatient for education. We seek quicker access to knowledge. Traditional methods of education have been too slow for us. We have devised faster methods. Even in technical fields, we seek short cuts. Finding them, we promptly brush aside the old patterns and dignify the new.

Much good has resulted from these short cuts. Our youth acquire an intellectual grasp and vocational skills at a much earlier age than their forefathers. They "know it all" in their teens. However, as we watch them take their place in society, questions rise in our minds.

Are there really short cuts to wisdom, to understanding, to maturity? Are we making our youth pay a price for our impatience? Until young people balance factual knowledge with a sense of value, until they grow in responsibility for the powers their technical skill creates or releases, are they ready to take their place in society?

Sober educators are not so sure today that there are as many short cuts in education as they once believed. To transmit ideas without sharing the depth of experience which lies beneath them may be like telling youth where to find the answers without giving them an insight into the method by which the answer was gained. To pass on techniques without relating the technique to the broader range of experience which is its rightful context may be like putting a high-powered aircraft in the hands of a boy who knows only how to fly.

Americans are wondering today whether a little more time and patience may not prove a higher virtue in education than that excess of impatience which puts too high a premium on short cuts.

III

We are impatient when it comes to religion. We ask, "What is religion supposed to do?" The answer we give defines our goal. Having determined the goal, we then give ourselves to the task of working out short cuts to it.

Impatience oversimplifies religion. It results in an arbitrariness which might well be a cardinal sin. For once the goal of religious endeavor is defined, all else is forgotten and all energies are directed to its achievement.

When the goal of religion is defined in terms of individual salvation, for example, nothing matters except that men be brought to Christ. Short cuts are sought and exploited. Ministers speak of the hundreds they "saved." Too frequently, "saved" means "put on church rolls."

When the goal is social salvation, the goal of religion becomes social action. Short cuts are devised and the crusade for a better society begins. Some ministers today believe that if every Christian were on the picket line, God's Kingdom would be at hand. Works are important, but without faith they are dead.

Individual salvation and social salvation are both goals of religion. However, to oversimplify religion so that an arbitrarily selected goal may be achieved is an unworthy procedure. There are no short cuts to grace. To act as though there were is to prostitute religion.

Perhaps the most blatant example of short cuts in religious experience is to be found in prayer. Prayer has become an escape for impatient Christians. Lacking the faith and patience to do the slow, hard tasks involved in accomplishing God's will, impatient Christians cry out to God to do the dirty work himself and then append their profession of faith that he can do it.

Prayer is one of the most misused resources of religious living. It is rewarding only when used by patient men who are doing their best to accomplish the things for which they pray. How can men expect anything from prayer when, unwilling to pay the price of service themselves, they urge God to take over and make good for them. When impatient men turn to prayer they reveal their belief that it is a short cut.

Jesus said that religion rests upon love of God and love of one's fellows. There are no short cuts. Faith and patience and service are the only sure way.

IV

We are impatient for peace. Listen to these words of Paul Austin Wolfe, minister of the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York city: "In our country we are inclined to be impatient for world peace. We have wanted it, sought for it, longed for it these many years. We begin to want it in a hurry, to be impatient of all the difficulties and obstacles which seem to thwart it. In 1928 we plunged for the Kellogg Pact. In the '30s we plunged for neutrality. Now we are ready to plunge for a council of nations, a superstate. How much we need to restrain our impatience! There are no short cuts to world peace. Today the realities of the postwar world are seen but dimly, if seen at all. It will be necessary for us to be more than impatient for peace: at home we will need a nation united, patient, resolved; abroad we will need a diplomacy handled with integrity, skill and authority."

Wise words, these!

Even as the United Nations Conference convened in San Francisco, posters appeared everywhere in that city welcoming delegates to the "Peace Conference." Our secretary of state protested that this was not *the* peace conference. It was a conference, he said, with a limited objective—to seek an organization for preserving the peace. The "Peace Conference" would have yet to be held.

These posters reflected our impatience. We want ace. We want it quickly. Woe unto us if our patience leads us to seek short cuts. There are no ort cuts to peace. Only in patience can we hope achieve it—to maintain it.

V

Americans—by nature, impatient—must be taught tience. They must be warned that their enthusiasm r short cuts may lead them to ruin. It must not so.

Patience does not imply resignation or passivity. It plies profound understanding, true wisdom, reso- te purpose. It is not a sign of weakness. It is a gn of strength.

The patient man will not reject short cuts simply cause they are short cuts. He will rather pause discern whether they bring the true goals of life arer or miss them entirely. Only if they lead more rectly to the ultimate goals are they really short cuts.

Let the church assume a new responsibility in Amer- a in these days. Let its voice be raised against im- tience in matters of health, education, religious ing and world order. Let its voice be heard in e land pleading for that patience which serves the use of God and man.

We have as our example One who was patient even to death. The fruit of his patience we all enjoy. e knew that there were no short cuts to the world envisioned. We, too, must learn.

Why Treasure the Bible?

THE BIBLE is the most outstanding Book ever writ- n. The languages in which it originally appeared ve long since joined the ranks of the dead, but the ords of this ancient Book have been reincarnated the living speech of every continent on earth. Civili- tions crumble, but the Word of God endures.

Why is it that men treasure the Bible? Because the Word of God is an eternal Word and gives answers questions that arise in the souls of men. Man is er confronted with problems. Calamity smites him; nfusion overtakes him; fortune smiles or frowns upon m. Out of all this welter of conflicting emotions he ies for a sure word of direction, a solace to his ounded spirit, a light amid his surrounding darkness. hese he must have or perish. With grateful heart he nds them unerringly in the Bible. It speaks his nguage; it "finds" him where he is and points him the place to which he wishes to go. It thus is born ew as the vivid and satisfying answer to the need every generation. As long as men desire reality d seek for God they will turn wistfully to the pages this immortal epic of the soul.

PAUL B. KERN.

CHRISTIANITY does not consist in abstaining from ing things no gentleman would think of doing, but doing things that are unlikely to occur to anyone ho is not in touch with the spirit of Christ.

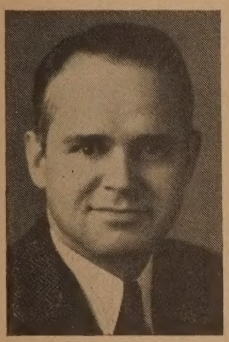
R. H. L. SHEPPARD.

Prayer in Time of Trouble

BY WESNER FALLAW

Scripture: Luke 11:1-10; John 12:31-36a.

DURING the ordinary course of your life you experience a surprising number of crises, a surprising number of high moments, religiously motivated moments. Added to these are moments of despondency and despair which you must meet during your life. And now that your life is intimately caught up in the flux and ordeal of these extraordinary times, you may not expect merely your usual allotment of ordeal and crisis. For this is a time of multiplied pain, sorrow, loneliness, death. This is a time when, to the individuals of any group, armed warriors facing battle or weary civilians confronting the emptiness left by sons, daughters and husbands departed, it may be said: You will not escape your own particular crisis—an experience enwrapping you and God alone, or you and fear or rebellion alone. It will be you and God—and nobody else to reassure and strengthen you; or it will be you and rending fears; it will be you and your own rebelliousness—just you and your resignation or spite against the fates, with no other agency, human or divine, to give you succor. As with the warrior, so with the civilian anxiously waiting at home. To each the reminder must be made: In crisis, in pain, in sorrow, in death, it is you and your emptiness, or you with God and his sufficiency made over to you, as your sufficiency.



WHAT RELIGION INVOLVES

Religion, every high moment known to the human spirit, be that moment intense woe or inexpressible joy, is primarily an experience of solitude understood by prayer. The philosopher is right—religion is what you do in your solitariness. But religion also involves what happens to you, what is done to you in the solitude of supreme joy or tragedy. For it is not alone what you do—as the active agent—in crisis, in success snatched from failure or in defeat suffered when triumph was near; it is also what the experience itself does to you. Does pain drive you to captious denouncement of man and fate, or does it take you to new insights wherein you become spiritually refined? Does sorrow unman you, or does it teach you of God who sorrows when his children suffer? Does the nearness of your own death leave you fear-ridden, convinced of the futility we call the days of our years, or does it make you confident that life now is but a suggestion of better life beyond the moment of physical death?

Yes, religion embraces you and fate; you and trial;

you and tribulation; you and tragedy; you and deep grief; you and death. True religion places you and God side by side in these crucial moments. True religion fortifies and enables you, by God's mercy and power, to triumph and not to fail; to exult and not to despair; to pass into, through and beyond death, knowing it for what it is—an episode in your eternal life. He who prays understands; he who does not pray has no understanding—nor can gain it by the hearing of ear when another speaks.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

What is this thing called religion, that it can so mightily defeat pain and death itself? Religion is what a man does in his solitariness? Yes. But this is too limited an answer, for a man in his lonely moment of crisis is not alone—if he be one who lives by faith in God. Forsaken in sorrow and death by the limitations of human nature, by the limitations of his fellows however much they desire to abide with and comfort him, every sufferer—actuated by trust in God where he dare not hope for mortal ease—can surely know the companionship of his God. He who lives by faith, by prayer, is not alone; therefore his religion is what he and God accomplish—together. And the quality of every man's religion is the quality of his confidence and conduct when in the midst of personal sorrow and pain. Religion is what you and your personal God do; religion is what the experiences of life and death work in and through you. The religious man is the man purified and refined when sorrow and pain come. He is not broken in spirit when his body is broken. Yea, more, he finds the wholeness of life, a wholeness he had not sensed nor known until the ordeals and tragedies which are woven into human existence are visited upon him.

Have you wondered about life and its completion? Have you sought to know the full meaning of man and God? Do you desire that the shadowed recesses of mystery be illumined for your edification? Then you must know sorrow and pain. Then you must visit the house of prayer. Then you must climb the high, heady hills to your own particular pinnacle of life—beyond which you may not see, but from which experience you may hope to find that life's completion is rightly entwined in death. Through religion, by means of your religion, that hope is yours, a hope brought to fulfillment after you have crossed the dark waters, after you have breasted the icy stream.

BY THE WAY OF SORROW

But now, today, at this moment of health, vigor and confident belief that your loved ones shall come safely through present dangerous and frightful experiences, what are you saying? Are you saying, All is well? Or do you say with the ancient poet of Israel: "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me"?

When the religious spirit raises this cry, moved by intensity of feeling to address his question to the heart of mystery, he has quick answer. The answer is no. For there can be no other sorrow like yours, and none like that of any other. Every sorrow, eve grief, every fear—like every pain and every death- is unique, personal. These move in parallels; the can never merge nor join. These can never be tru shared. And though one man may sense the need another he cannot carry so much as a part of it, n do more than lift the load of it but for a rare an fleeting moment. Only God can enter into, sha and lighten the burden of suffering, the force of fea the weight of death.

It is well for a human being to say, out of t fervor of his soul, for his fellows to hear: "We a never so much our best selves, as when self is forgotte and we enter into the joys and sorrows of those wh need us most."

It is good for a congregation to lift its voice in t old hymn:

> We share each other's woes,
> Each other's burdens bear;
> Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
> Our comforts and our cares.

But as no man can love for you, and you must the loving so that you may experience love, therefo know it—so no man can suffer for you. And as t ecstasy of another can in no wise guarantee ecsta for you, so no other can take the pain out of yo body and bear it in his own.

Truly we perceive that life's high moments—m ments of joy and sorrow, moments of life and dea —are personal, are very, very intimate. And just loneliness always attends the man who climbs t heights of exceptional triumph and noble achievemen so in these other rare experiences—these experienc of grief, defeat, pain and death—man wanders alon except he walk by faith with God.

LIFE'S DEAREST TREASURE

Now, to lay stress on the individual nature of r ligion is not to forget or deny that religion is also a experience within community. Indeed, without spi itual community, without communion with huma kind, a man's religion is vain and his love of Go questionable, if not impossible. The relations you ha with your fellows are the very stuff of religion. B just now your relations with God constitute our co cern. The individual and his God, you and wh religion means to you as you face tribulation—let the be dealt with in the spirit and in the truth of t Christian religion.

Let the Christian view personal religion as the dea est treasure he possesses. Let him hold it fast, cli tightly to it that it may hold him the closer, sustainin and nurturing him like sun and food. Let the Chri tian have this experience under ordinary conditio and he will have it when stress and crisis come. H religion is his most cherished possession. With it will act as did the shipwrecked naval officer who can up swimming—swimming with one hand tightly clos because in it was a valued object which he refused lose, even at the risk of his life. This man was holdin on to the ring his wife had given him, not letting

ip from the finger which the water had shrunk.

In every experience of life, amid routine duties of ving and in the midst of accident and tragedy, the hristian has his treasure, his symbol of comfort and spiration to greater effort that he may endure and iumph; the Christian has his religion, has his God. loser than hands and feet, as life-giving as breath in e body, God, the Father of Jesus whom the Chris- an has come to know and love, is personally present hen prayer invites him.

PRAYER A LIFE ATTITUDE

"More things are wrought by prayer than this world reams of," sang Tennyson. So testifies the man whose hief treasure is religion. The religious man does not ait for catastrophe or near catastrophe to pray. Long ince he has learned to pray without ceasing. His hole life is taken up with prayer, because his every ttitude toward man and event is an attitude of prayer, n attitude of trust in God, faith in man, hope for oodness actualized in human events, and love empow- ring all human relations. When a man prays the ove of God is in him, and God, being love, is himself n man. God's spirit in man—in the man who prays! What an achievement! What gain! What permanent nd durable value! And this—available to every ne whose heart is lifted to God.

It is not only by word of mouth that you may pray. More than this, it is by the mood of your inmost heart hat you pray. And it is by conditioning your every ct to the spirit of Christ that you pray. It is by mak- ng his attributes your own that your needs can be met. Love, joy, peace, thanksgiving, goodness, mercy, jus- ice, patience, humility—these are the attributes of Jesus the Master of whom his friends requested: 'Lord, teach us to pray." And so he taught them. . . .

Speak directly, personally, to the Father. Tell him our first desire is that his realm shall come into the affairs of men. Ask that his will be done, and be done right here on earth. And as you ask that your odily needs be met, pray devoutly that the trespasses of which you are guilty against your fellows be for- given—just as you, by choice and in daily conduct, make a practice of forgiving those who wrongly use you. Make known to the Father that you hope for deliverance from evil, that you scorn all temptations, looking toward God's Kingdom, his power and his glory, now and forever. Emphasize your belief now, in this moment in time; and emphasize your Christian hope for eternal life—a life for yourself, a personal existence through all time.

HOW, AND FOR WHAT, TO PRAY

This is the kind of praying the disciples learned from Jesus. With him, with them, with us, there is no question as to whether one should pray; no question as to the effectiveness of prayer. To be religious is to pray; and not to pray is to be irreligious. But there is a question about how we are to pray, for *what* we are to pray, and for what we are *not* to pray. Look again at this model prayer which Jesus taught the men who asked, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Speak to God, said Jesus, as your Father—a personal being whose love encompasses you and all men. In the mood of prayer, which ought to be your every con- scious mood, revere his name. His name is to be hal- lowed by you, never profaned. If you profane his name you may assuredly know that you are not a person of prayer. Pray for the coming of God's realm; work for the accomplishment of his will, not your will. It is fitting that you seek only your necessary material needs. It is unprayerful of you to seek more than this. It is fitting that you conduct yourself in a forgiving manner toward those who mistreat you. It is un- prayerful for you to retaliate for evil; and it is a pro- fanation of God and the use of prayer to ask for help in doing your enemy to death. It is fitting that you ask God's pardon for your sins. It is unprayerful for you to think yourself blameless. It is fitting that your life be dedicated to working the works of God, for his glory. It is unprayerful for you to place main em- phasis on seeking your own power and glory.

These things we may pray for—and get: reverence for God; the blessed experience of entering his King- dom; the accomplishment of God's will; provision for our material needs; forgiveness for our sins, as we learn to forgive those who sin against us; support by goodness in the moment of temptation and deliverance from evil; adoration of God in his glory and desire that his power rule us and all the earth. And these things we may *not* pray for—nor get: realization of our petty, selfish interests; a multiplying of material possessions; the cleverness to injure or kill men; the power to exercise vengeance; the upbuilding of our own glory.

RIGHT AND WRONG PRAYING

There is, then, right praying and wrong praying; there is effective prayer and worthless prayer. Prayer learned from Jesus' teaching can bring you more help than this insensitive world dreams of. Therefore, pray. Pray unceasingly so that your daily life shall be the outward expression of your worshipful inner being. Pray in the privacy of your heart, and pray in com- mon worship with your fellows. Pray, nothing doubt- ing, for the friend who scoffs at religion. Pray for those who despitefully use you. Pray for the boy far away in war, that he may with stout heart and faith in God endure, courageous in danger, steadfast if pain comes, confident if death comes.

Religion and prayer are linked, inseparable as day and light. Your religion binds you to God, so that in your solitariness you are not solitary, God being your constant companion. Prayer makes him your companion. And your praying may make him the companion of those for whom you pray. As a Chris- tian you would with your whole heart, soul and mind bind all men to your Father, God. You begin the process when you first make him your companion— through prayer which enables you to deal with every ordinary situation and with all the crises you face in these extraordinary times.

Every religious spirit, abandoned by men at the moment of decision and fear, resorts to the mood of

worship that brings divine companionship. In danger, when pain comes, when death threatens, the man of religion is concerned only with that which is worthful. For him, then, only God is worthful. There was Moses, alone in the wilderness, facing the rigors of rescuing his people from slavery—or leaving them to destruction. He turned to God and the crisis passed into triumph. There was Elijah, the forsaken prophet alone in the desert, fearing the loss of his people. He turned to God and a personal and national crisis passed into triumph. There was Socrates, condemned to death, abandoned by the citizens of his native Athens. But strong in belief that at death he would enter a blessed land, this lover of truth prayed as he took the cup of poison in hand, spoke comforting words to grieving friends and so passed to victory over death. There was Jesus, deserted by disciples who slept while he agonized alone in Gethsemane. Only God his Father did not desert him. God was there when the prayer of Jesus, wrung from his tortured soul as he faced death, was: "Not my will, but thine be done." And from that victory Jesus went to a cross on which he could in triumph pray that God might forgive those who crucified him—because they knew not what they did.

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Moses, Elijah, Socrates, Jesus, and all the men who by faith in God have won their victories over solitude, fear, pain and death, beckon to us—to you. You, a spiritual being, belong with these victors over crisis and death. Pray that your religion may bind you to God, who is never so real, never so close, never so strong and quick to help, as when you have passed from ordinary problems into the midst of crisis and untold trouble. Christ has promised, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." You who profess religion, you who know the power of prayer, lift him up! And as he draws you to his Father, all your loneliness, all your solitude is peopled with God himself and his company of the blessed.

THE BIBLE is not actually lost, but unknown. The world is so indifferent to it that even its enemies do not bother to criticize it. Not many people abuse it. It is just ignored. "Time has made ancient good uncouth," and we seek elsewhere for the understandings and the techniques which are needed for the reconstruction of our modern society. To most youth the Bible is unknown. We are faced with an amazing spectacle—a generous, charming and candid generation without the knowledge of biblical literature.

FREDERICK K. STAMM.

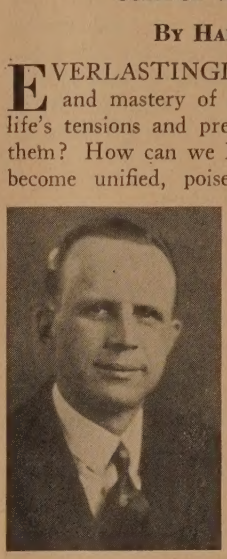
A REMARK once made about Coleridge throws light on the relation of Jesus to the world's welfare. A critic has said, "Wherever we seek to go in criticism we always meet Coleridge coming back." It is also true that wherever we go in the study of human relationships "we always meet Jesus coming back."

HALFORD E. LUCCOCK.

Managing Our Tensions and Pressures

BY HAROLD W. RUOPP

EVERLASTINGLY involved in the management and mastery of ourselves is the management o life's tensions and pressures. What can we do abou them? How can we learn to handle them so that w become unified, poised, serene persons rather tha turbulent and chaotic half-per sons?



To begin with, we must stud and analyze our tensions an pressures in order to discove which of them are inevitabl and wholesome, and which ar needless and meaningless. Fo some of life's tensions are inevi table, and some of them ar wholesome. Indeed, the com plete absence of all tensions an pressures would mean an empt vacuum in which no soul coul grow. A human being can be explained not only i terms of a push from behind but also of a pull fron ahead. The biological thrust from behind and the pul of great ideals and the spiritual world from ahead Where earth and heaven meet, there you have a hu man soul; and both earth and heaven exert thei respective pressures upon that soul. If man were onl divinity, or only dust, presumably he would have n pressures or tensions—but then he would not be man he would be either God or cabbage.

TENSIONS—INEVITABLE AND NEEDLESS

It is because of this fact that profound religion ha always insisted that certain tensions must be maintaine if life is to grow and mature. One of those tension is "being in the world and yet not of the world." Tha must be maintained. So also must the tension betwee what we now are and what we might—and ought—t become. That too must be kept, else we become smug complacent, self-satisfied, and life sinks down to th level of dull mediocrity.

But if it be true that some of our tensions and pres sures are inevitable and wholesome, it is equally tru that there are others that are needless. Not only ar they unnecessary; they are dangerous, taking a heav toll in health and peace of mind. Such, for example are the tensions set up by conflicting desires, thos which are induced by groundless fears and anxieties the tensions of wrong attitudes—envy, greed, lust hatred, resentment; in short, the tensions that alway result when the center of a man's life and the objec of his devotion is the ego.

One manifestation or symptom of this constant ten sion is hurry—breathless haste. Hurry is a peculiarl American disease, so much so indeed that it has bee given the name "Americanitis." For a whole generatio we have been keyed up, literally traveling "on ou

rves." A man running up an escalator—that is a cture of the typical American! Driven sometimes by avy responsibilities, sometimes by false ambitions, metimes by the tyranny of avarice, sometimes by an ggerated sense of our own importance, sometimes o by a false philosophy of life which says "Sink or vim"—we hurry, we bustle, we hustle. That has come our settled habit of mind, our fixed habit of ving. It is not strange therefore that we have become high-strung, harassed, nervous people, with dyspepsia nd neurasthenia as our two most common complaints.

FUTILE ACTIVITIES A PERIL

Twenty years ago I clipped a cartoon from a popular agazine. It impressed me then; it impresses me still. his cartoon pictures a man, with a watch in his and, running breathlessly up a path which leads over e hills to the setting sun, before which is silhouetted cemetery and in the rays of which is the word "Suc-ss." Under this cartoon are the words: "Success at orty—Death at Fifty."

Someone has put the biography of many people into n amusing poem:

n Monday she lunched with a Housing Committee,
With statistics and stew she was filled;
hen she dashed to a tea on "Crime in Our City,"
And dined with a Church Ladies' Guild.

n Tuesday she went to a Babies' Week Lunch,
And a tea on "Good Citizenship";
t dinner she talked to the Trade Union bunch,
(There wasn't a date she dared skip).

n Wednesday she managed two annual dinners,
One at noon and the other at night;
n Thursday a luncheon on "Bootleg Sinners,"
And a dinner on "War: Is It Right?"

World Problems We Face" was her Friday noon date,
(A luncheon-address, as you guessed);
nd she wielded a fork while a man from New York
Spoke that evening on "Social Unrest."

n Saturday noon she fell in a swoon,
Missed a talk on the youth of our land. . . .
oor thing, she was through! She never came to,
But died with a spoon in her hand.

REDUCING TENSIONS TO MINIMUM

What can we do about our tensions and pressures? he first step, I repeat, is to discover which of them re needless, and then begin gradually to reduce those nsions to their irreducible minimum. In the beginning this will require an effort of will, deliberately eveloping a way of life which is serene, composed, alm; a way of life in which one is the master of his nsions, not the victim of them.

We may now go on to say that many times we auto-uggest ourselves into tensions and turmoil and haste y a constant use of the word "pressure." In these roubled days we speak again and again of "the pres-ures of the war," "the pressures of the times," "the ressures of living." It would of course be foolish to eny that pressures have increased by leaps and bounds uring the past two or three years. And yet we need to check on ourselves once and again to discover whether or not we are putting ourselves under needless tension by reacting to the word "pressure" when in our lives there is no reality back of the word. This is a common, although usually unconscious, habit with most of us. We react to words in our vocabulary, even though those words are only symbols with no corresponding reality. This is to say that if we repeat the word "pressure" to ourselves often enough, sooner or later we shall become just as nervously and emotionally tense as though there were real pressures in our lives.

Many of our tensions and pressures moreover result from a wrong attitude which we have toward the inevitable difficulties and troubles of life. Here, for example, is a mother with a family of five, and with no help in her home. There are numberless meals to be prepared, dishes to be washed, beds to be made, floors to be swept, clothes to be mended, fingers to be bandaged, colds to be treated. Or here is a business man with an endless succession of committee meetings, with a mass of correspondence to be answered, with perplexing problems in his office, and constantly changing governmental regulations. Life for that mother and that business man becomes complex and confused. They are apt to become upset, nervous, tense. What is the difficulty? Part of it at least is due to the fact that they tend to see themselves as soldiers "attacked by enemies from every side" all at the same time.

PATHS TO SERENITY

What is the remedy? It consists of getting a different mental image of themselves. They would do well, as James Gordon Gilkey somewhere suggests, to picture themselves as clerks sitting behind a post-office window. "All sorts of people, laden with all sorts of bundles, are waiting outside the window. But they are waiting in line. They reach the window one by one and in sequence: they never make a mass-attack. The line outside the window may continue all day, but at any given moment only one person stands before the window. By dealing with all those individuals one by one the clerk at the window can live through the day, live through it with little sense of strain. By splitting a long and difficult task into its component parts and then handling those parts in sequence he can keep inwardly serene."

By some such process as this, we can all free ourselves of some of life's needless tensions and pressures and live with much greater serenity than most of us do.

But beyond these suggestions and far more important, we must learn the art of relaxation, for relaxation means strength and power. "Through quiescence, energy can be had. By laying aside power you can get power: letting go in order to a new taking hold." Paradoxical as that may be, it is nevertheless one of the laws of life.

We see this law illustrated in the lives of certain people. There are persons who get a great deal done, and yet they are never nervous, fussy, tense, but give instead the impression of poise and serenity—and power. Indeed, their power comes precisely because

they have learned, not how to eliminate all the pressures of life, but how to do away with those which are needless and to manage those which are inevitable. They illustrate Goethe's familiar motto, *"Ohne Hast, ohne Rast"*—without haste, without rest. "They work steadily and to vast purpose, but always without hurry."

FLOW AND EBB IN NATURE

We also see this law operating in nature. Nature works upon the principle of alternation—flow and ebb, action and reaction, contraction and expansion, effort and relaxation. The human heart is illustrative of the principle. We are in the habit of saying that the heart never rests, that it works continuously. That is not true. The heart works, then rests, then works, then rests. Someone has estimated that the heart's relaxation amounts to fifteen hours out of each twenty-four. Systole followed by diastole; contraction followed by relaxation. If the heart worked all the time, it would wear itself out in a relatively short time.

In this law of effort followed by relaxation, we find the basic principle that will help us all in the management of our pressures and tensions, no matter how many or how great they may be.

In the rush of work and the pressure of life, we must learn to relax. Relaxation is not something which can be given us by other people nor can we get it in a moment of time. It must be consciously and deliberately studied and practiced. It must be a science before it can become an art. A science uses the rules and is conscious of their application; an art while it uses the rules is no longer conscious of them because they have become habitual. So also with relaxation! It must begin as an act of will; gradually it will become a settled habit, taking the place of the old habit of tension and haste.

Assuming then that we want to reach this goal and master relaxation so that it becomes an art, the question is, How? What is the method? What is the process?

MUSCULAR RELAXATION AN AID

Several suggestions may be given. A good place to begin is to learn the art of voluntary muscular relaxation. Once or twice a day, for a period of ten or fifteen or thirty minutes, lie flat on the floor or on a hard mattress. Close the eyelids gently, take several deep, easy breaths, and think how heavy you are—lying as limp as a cat before a fireplace. Then begin with various muscles, relaxing them in turn. Think to yourself—"I relax the muscles of my face," "I relax the muscles of my neck"—and so on all the way down to the tips of your fingers and the tips of your toes. After a time you will feel the tension going out of your muscles, at the same time you will find your mind relaxing. This cannot be learned in a day, or a week, but with patience and perseverance it can be learned. If someone says, "This will take time out of my busy life," it may be answered: "No more time than you now waste in fretting and fussing and in being sick because of your needless tensions."

There are other helpful methods which can be use in learning the art of relaxation. One of them is t think certain words—words like serenity, poise, quie ness, peace, hope and joy. The words chosen shoul all be free from unfortunate emotional association words too which suggest the goal we are trying t reach.

Another method is to use visual images, images tha suggest quietness and relaxation. A wet oak lea lying on a log—rain drops softly falling on the roof— fleecy white clouds drifting through the blue heaver —a stream moving quietly through fields and forests— a sunset across the lake—a bird gliding effortless through the air.

POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS

Still another method is to make great positive affirm ations—our own or someone else's. "He maketh me t lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside th still waters. He restoreth my soul." "My presenc shall go with you, and I will give you rest." "I quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. Or one may say to himself: "God is giving me h strength, God is giving me his peace, God is givin me his power."

Muriel Lester tells of a breakdown in health whic she once had, and how through learning relaxation sh gradually worked her way back to new health and ne power. In her periods of relaxation, she would say t herself: "With every breath I draw, I am breathin in the very breath of God."

Combining the suggestions given above, I have foun the following method especially helpful to me—a indeed, it has proved helpful to others. In a reclinin position with muscles relaxed as can be, I see in m mind's eye an ocean—vast, illimitable! I remind my self of the lines of the hymn, "There's a wideness i God's mercy, Like the wideness of the sea."

On this ocean I see a ship. In comparison to th "wideness of the sea," it is a tiny fragile thing. Tha ship does not try to sustain itself, it does not strugg to hold itself up; rather it puts all its weight on th ocean and permits the ocean to sustain it. God is lik that, so I say to myself; a vast ocean, and I can trus myself to him—not trying to hold myself up by m own efforts but letting him hold me up. So with a ancient biblical writer, I repeat several times: "Th eternal God is (my) refuge, and underneath are th everlasting arms."

'LET GO,' 'LET GOD'

With some such process as this I find, not freedo from all tensions, but serenity in the midst of life pressures. When I fail, as fail I often do, I know tha the trouble is not with God, but with me. In thos periods of failure, I know that I am not willing t "let go" and "let God."

For that is the ultimate secret of the managemen not only of our tensions and pressures, but of our de sires, our fears and worries, our troubles, our tempta tions, our moods, our limitations and handicaps, an our defeats and failures, to *let go—and let God.*

Life's Hill Country

By Thomas H. Newcomb

I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains:
From whence shall my help come?
My help cometh from Jehovah,
Who made heaven and earth.
—Psalm 121:1, 2

WERE you ever far away from kinsfolk and acquaintances, and homesick? Quite certainly this almist was when he penned the immortal poem which lovingly and familiarly known as "The Traveler's Psalm." He was no doubt an exile in distant Babylon, but in his heart still were the "highways to Zion." He could not see with physical eyes the beloved hills where his desires were set, yet they were mirrored in his soul, and often in thought he shared again the rewarding fellowship of dear remembered friends, or walked reverently into the sacred courts of the Temple. No true son of Israel could think of this

:vered place but with a quickened pulse. So, with eart yearning for the old familiar faces, and soul ungering for the courts of Jehovah's House, he declared, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains." We, like the psalmist, are pilgrims in a land not our wn. For if we have found God—or rather, have een found of him—then we can never again really e at home in this world. Often, amid all the trafcking and low thought of irreverent and godless men, ve too will feel the high pull of the mountains and earn for the pure air of the sun-bathed peaks of God. And no man, caught in the smoke and miasma of the vorld's flat plains, ever need feel ashamed at this call f the hills. It is but the sign and seal that he is yet piritually alive. Never apologize for having faith. Principal L. P. Jacks, of Manchester College, Oxford, tates the case splendidly when he says:

> Religion therefore does not apologize for itself, does not stand on the defensive, does not justify its presence in the world. If theorists would vindicate religion they may do so; but religion comes forth in the majesty of silence like a mountain amid the lifting mists. All the strong things of the world are its children, and whatever strength is summoned to its support is the strength which its own spirit has called into being.

Conscious of our spiritual hungers and thirsts, and ver grateful that we have a heavenly Father whose ar is open to the cry of even the least of his children, et us fortify our souls in him by frequent glad communings, and "lift up our hearts." Prayer is a lifting ip of our eyes unto the mountains!

It is a challenging and sobering thought that each of us must choose his own hill country. In other vords, each of us must decide for himself just what things in life shall hold the center of his interest and demand the major portion of his endeavor. What a sad commentary on human frailty and shortsightedness that so many, dominated apparently by "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life," choose either insignificant molehills or very unimpressive ranges. The immortal Bunyan, in his *Pilgrim's Progress,* when urging upon his hearers the claims of Christian discipleship, declared there were many who looked up to nothing higher in life than to "a little hill called Lucre, with its silver mine." Life, for many today, also lacks a challenging view of the hills.

It is passing strange that some men, with no intent to rebuild, should find such delight in tearing down. Yet in certain quarters it seems to have become a pleasing pastime to seek to level down the peaks of faith. Religion, in the thought of some, is "the opiate of the people"; to others, the historic Christian faith seems altogether too otherworldly and impractical. "There is science now," says someone, "one can live by that!" So men reject inspiration, and the supernatural, and the miraculous. In place of revealed religion, they substitute that which is man-made. Humanism knows no God save man himself; rationalism discards everything that cannot be intellectually discerned; atheism denies even the existence of God; agnosticism declares that, at best, God is forever unknowable; cynicism snarls that human conduct is directed solely by self-interest—that there is no such thing as disinterested goodness; stoicism accepts both pleasure and pain, but knows no heavenly Father who cares or shares; and modernism denies the deity of Christ, and both the efficacy and the need of the blood atonement! Not much hill country there—only flimsy molehills!

However, if there are no peaks in "our most holy faith," we must be honest and admit it. There is no advantage in self-deception; and it is cruel indeed to hold before the gaze of the distressed and burdened, visions and promises which are foundationless. Only we must admit that if the great assurances of the New Testament are only the "wishful thinking" of gullible and misinformed men, then there is no redemption and no satisfying faith, and we are indeed "of all men most pitiable." Level down the peaks if you must, but know surely that thereby you destroy the Christian faith, for its very strength and genius lie in the fact that it is a religion of the hills. It is like Everest, loftiest of the great Himalayas, towering in unrivaled grandeur above all other ranges. But, for myself, the peaks still stand.

We are finite but God is infinite; we are fallible but God is infallible; we are human and limited in thought and knowledge, but God is omniscent and omnipotent. Could I rationally explain God and understand God, I would be as great as he, and this no mortal should presume to be. There is more to Christ than I can ever hope to fathom or clearly understand; there are mysteries in the Godhead too great for human minds to grasp. So, having exhausted our powers of discernment, let us walk by faith where

we cannot walk by sight. The Christian faith never goes against reason, but it often goes beyond reason! With the great apostle, I too declare my faith: "I believe God." And I am ready to follow him, even when I cannot fully understand.

I

What then are some of the peaks which stand in the Christian's hill country? There are many, but I shall mention only three; and the first of these is a hill called Sinai.

Sinai stands for Law. At the foot of this rugged mountain, when only three months out of Egypt, the Twelve Tribes rested while Moses went up into its summit to commune with God and to receive the "Ten Words." There are, of course, those who belittle the Decalogue and declare that it has long since become moth-eaten and obsolete—that its commands no longer carry any authority but may be broken with impunity. A more serious fact however is that a far larger number, while not taking time openly to deny the authority of the Ten Commandments, nonetheless find ample time to ignore and break them. We hear much these days about juvenile delinquency. Parental authority is at a low ebb; respect for law and the recognized standards of well ordered social life are often spurned. Breaking law and "getting by with it" is the open boast of many. Things have come to such a pass that recently a responsible public official seriously declared: "We have become a nation of lawbreakers." As for the higher laws of God in the moral and spiritual realm, they are often simply ignored entirely.

But did you ever stop to think that no one ever broke a law of God? And insofar as our man-made laws conform to the Divine Law, they too cannot be broken. Men can ignore God's laws, or flout them; they can choose to walk in their own heady ways, defying God's holy and just commands. But the Law will still stand; it is they who will be broken! "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." I have it in my power to defy the law of gravity if I will, but when I "break" this law I do not thereby destroy its power or effectiveness. The simple fact is that, by my disobedience, I myself will be destroyed. Here is the God-appointed law of the Sabbath: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Many are ignoring this command. But because man is man, with an immortal soul, and not brute, his infringement of this wise law will leave an indelible scar upon his soul. Here is God's law as regards our bodies: "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God . . . if any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy." Men may spurn, are spurning by the thousands, this wise demand, but they do so at their own peril. God asks of his children cleanness of thought and high moral conduct—"Thou shall not commit adultery." And multitudes continue to flout this rule, but they pay an awful price in wretchedness and disease, in broken homes, in marital unhappiness and scarred souls.

Men do not break God's laws; they may attempt to break them, but they themselves are broken every time

It is silly for willful men to take the bit in the teeth and boastfully declare that God's moral laws a "not in fashion" in our day. The poet Lowell w right:

> In vain we call old notions fudge,
> And bend our conscience to our dealing;
> The Ten Commandments will not budge,
> And stealing will continue stealing.

God's laws are timeless, and his decrees are still bin ing. Today, no less than in a former age, "the wag of sin is death." God is not mocked; when his lav are spurned, suffering and punishment inevitably fo low. Sinai has not crumbled to the plain.

II

But although Sinai still thrusts its peak skyward frowning grandeur, there is another mountain whi also stands tall in the Christian's hill country. It a mount called Calvary; and Calvary stands for Lov Law demands punishment; justice requires that sin ransom price be fully paid. But who can ever satis this debt? Certainly no son of man, for "all hav sinned, and fall short of the glory of God." If judg solely by the law, there is no salvation for any ma But just here Calvary comes in. "For what the la could not do, in that it was weak through the fles God, sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinf flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Lo has done what Law could never do.

I believe in the certainty of punishment for sin ar in the fact of hell, not because I relish the prospect eternal suffering for any man, but because of t plain teaching of God's Word. But I rejoice that this same Word there is revealed a wondrous R deemer, and a "love that will not let us go." Punis ment for broken law thunders from Sinai, but forgiv ness through appropriating faith in the merits of atoning Savior pleads from Calvary. Hell was pr pared "for the Devil and his angels," and it is n God's will that any human soul should ever be co signed there. Each one, however, "goes to his ow place"; and if men are godless and impenitent her even heaven itself could never be for them a hap place. One must have heaven first of all in his hea if he is one day to enjoy heaven. Hell, like heave is not only a place but a condition; and those who pa through its dread gates into outer darkness and t gnashing of teeth, go there, not because of God wrath but in spite of his love. "God so loved t world, that he gave . . . his son."

God in Christ, bearing the world's sin, agonizing bloody sweat in Gethsemane, dying for love of men Calvary, is certainly more wondrous to behold ar "mightier to save" than God thundering from rugg Sinai! If such love will not melt the cold hearts men, nothing else will. Who can understand or beg to appreciate the length and breadth and depth ar height of the amazing love of God?

When I think of Christ's love and suffering on Ca vary in our behalf and in our stead, I am remind of mother love; although of course no human love

rthy to be compared with the infinite love of God. t, limited as is human love, it may also in a certain se be redemptive. "Cannot you see, son," said my ther to me one day, when she had called me from ne heady rebellion into the quiet of her room—annot you see that what you are doing is breaking heart? It is spoiling the dream your father and ave always had for you—keeping God from answer- our prayers." Then she went on to tell me how, n before I was born, I had been the object of love d earnest prayer; how they had asked God to bring with a sturdy body and a fine mind; that I would ly learn the fear of God; and that I would grow to live a useful, Godly life. And as I listened, roughly ashamed, and saw the tears of wounded e glistening in my mother's eyes, I registered then d there a holy vow that I would never again, by care- s act or word, cause my mother's heart to bleed or r confidence in me to waver. What the law could ver have done, love did.

I have never found it easy to preach "hell-fire," yet e must be true to God's whole revelation; and Sinai ll stands. But thank God, there is this other peak—lvary, in faith's hill country; and of this peak I love tell. On this green hill, on a certain black Friday nturies ago, 'twixt earth and heaven they hung the ised and broken body of my Lord. The words of e familiar hymn come as a refrain:

> We may not know, we cannot tell,
> What pains he had to bear;
> But we believe it was for us
> He hung and suffered there.

s, it was for us! And how wonderful to be able thfully to declare to all sin-sick and hungering arts that here is a balm and a healing for our hurts—s, even for the deadly wound of sin itself. Here we love giving itself, freely and without stint, for the loved. And who are the beloved? Even we all ho were dead in our trespasses." Yet the gracious er is "that whosoever believeth . . . may have eternal e." What a declaration; what a gospel; what a vior!

What I can never understand is that so many, with fair understanding of what Christ is and what he and does for men, still withhold themselves from discipleship. Some are satisfied with glib excuses; ers accept him, but oh, so timidly, never yielding emselves in wholehearted enthusiasm to his cause. thers openly spurn his offer and malign his name, ing it only as an oath to punctuate their careless ech. And still others, sometimes very learned men, cept him as a brilliant teacher, or possibly as the high- man—but only as a man! His divinity, they say, s not unlike the divinity that inheres in every son of lam—greater in degree perhaps, but not different in nd. So his death was not propitiatory or atoning, but ly exemplary. I am not interested just here in any cial theory of the atonement, but it is my deep con- tion that any theory that makes Jesus less than od, and denies his propitiatory work and his death r sin in our stead, is not true to Scripture and is unworthy the acceptance of anyone calling himself Christian. Calvary still stands in spite of the indifference and scoffing and rationalizing of men; it exemplifies love—a love that gives and forgives; that heals and saves. How insignificant and unsatisfying are all the flat plains of rationalism and humanism, of modernism and materialistic evolution, when one has glimpsed the peaks of revealed religion!

III

Finally, there is a hill called Olivet. After tarrying on earth forty days following his resurrection, our Lord one day led the little company of his followers out to the slopes of Olivet, and there, the apostle records, "He was taken from them, and a cloud received him out of their sight." Luke, in the Acts, concludes: "And while they were looking . . . behold two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said . . . this same Jesus who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven." So they went back to their tasks, filled with joy and gladness, and pressed forward in their ministry, "the Lord working with them." He was not dead; he was not even absent. He was still living, present, available!

What a difference faith makes! It revolutionized the lives of these disciples; and the life of any man will be utterly changed when there falls upon him the mantle of such a faith. The disciples went forth to "turn the world upside down." Now, if not before, they were very sure of God. Now, both life and death and all that could come between were undergirded by his purpose and his peace. Such faith in Christ's ascension victory has been the strength and joy of God's people throughout all the intervening years.

When one day sorrow comes your way, and a casket in which some loved form lies is lowered into an open grave, it will be wonderfully assuring and strengthening to remember that "Christ died and was buried," but that death could not hold him. On that first Easter morning his friends approached his tomb only to find it torn open from the inside. He had risen and had gone forth, conqueror of death and the grave—"the first fruits of all that are asleep." So we listen once again, doubly assured now, to those faith-quickening words of Christ at the grave of Lazarus: "I am the resurrection and the life . . . whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." By his own victory over death he has proved his claim. Death cannot part us forever from our loved ones; one day we shall clasp them again to our hungry hearts, "and with God be the rest." Until that glad hour they are safe with their Lord, in the mansions he has gone on to prepare for all who love him.

Death did not conquer Christ; he conquered death! He died, only to rise again; and in rising, he shattered the power of death forever. In his victory over sin and death, and in his glorious resurrection, all his spiritual children share. So when death has done his worst, even then we, with Paul, can raise our paean of faith: "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and

the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." With Olivet in our hearts, we too can write upon the tombstones of our dead the words to be found upon Canon Wilberforce's tomb in Westminster Abbey: "He lives—he wakes! 'Tis death is dead, not he!" And it will be gloriously true. There is no death; we are immortal. Already we have set our feet upon eternity's shores; immortality even now is ours! Olivet still stands, and our future is secure.

The pull of the world is down-hill, but God's children are still sensitive to the call of the hills. It is not easy to climb the rugged steeps, and, caught in the hurlyburly and turmoil of the world's low purpose and frantic self-seeking, and often perplexed that God sometimes seems so indifferent to our cry, no doubt we are all at times tempted to cease our high striving. But "a man's reach must exceed his grasp, else what's a heaven for?" The promise is, "He that endureth to the end . . . shall be saved." Josiah Gilbert Holland, in his poem "Gradatim," gives us the same challenge to patient striving:

> Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
> But we build the ladder by which we rise
> From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
> And we mount to its summit round by round.

The atheists and rationalists and modernists are still busy, and they seem to take peculiar delight in leveling off all high peaks and dragging them to the plain. But every man still has the responsibility and privilege of choosing his own hill country, and the very genius of our Christian faith is that it summons to the heights. Sinai, and Calvary, and Olivet still stand, and he who looks, unless he be spiritually blind, may read the message they declare.

In the main street of Chamonix, in France, under the shadow of Mont Blanc, there is a monument commemorating the ascent of the mountain in 1787. It is a figure of the naturalist, Sassure, standing erect, looking up at the mountain, wondering and wistful. Beside him is the guide, Jacques Balmat, who the previous year had found his way to the summit. He is looking at the figure by his side as if saying: "Follow me; I have been there; I know the road." So, it seems to me, Christ stands beside every aspiring soul, and, for those who desire to climb, he extends his hand and says: "Follow me; I know the way. You too can reach the heights, if you will. Here, take my hand and we'll go up together!"

THE BIBLE, which reveals God's mind, once again must take its rightful place in our lives and in the daily life of the nation, and on it we must base our beliefs. We must accept God's view of ourselves and of our need, and then take the remedy he has provided for that need. SIR WILLIAM G. S. DOBBIE.

IF your spirit is reverent, it will discern God in a moorland waste; if your spirit is thoughtless and careless, it will fail to find him in the face of Jesus Christ. F. B. MEYER.

The Parable of the Compass

BY ERNEST MARSHALL HOWSE

The way of a ship in the midst of the sea.—Prove 30:19.

STORIES of the sea have universal appeal. T speak with the same enchantment to people b where the salt spray is in the air, and to those w have seen no nearer resemblance to the moving oc than the waves on a field prairie wheat. They share elemental fascination of "J the Giant." For the sea is of the greatest giants man ever challenged, and the wh human race thrills with the ventures and victories of ev great sailor. So long as va and audacity survive in heart of man, the names of lumbus and Cabot, Vasco Gama and Ponce de Le Henry Hudson and Will Baffin, Captain Cook and Sir John Franklin have niches of glory in the gallery of our remembra

Yet he who knows the tales will remark one ture—the conquest of the seas came late in hun development. The Egyptians, the Phoenicians, Greeks, the Romans, in all their adventurings, stop with the shore, or at least with the coastline and inland waters. They never challenged the oc Even the Arabians, the best geographers of follow days, clung to the continental coasts, and when t looked out to the illimitable Atlantic and saw lurid light of ocean sunset, they believed that the ning sun over the edge of the flat earth looked d on the fires of hell and they thought in terror of gnarled hand of Satan rising above the waves of w they called the "Sea of Darkness," ready to grasp engulf the mariner presumptuous enough to vent out from shore.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COMPASS

Man roamed the earth in his youth; the conq of the seas awaited his coming of age. The rea is simple. Beyond the limits of the coastline all n gation waited upon the development of one inst ment—that marvelous product of earth's mystery man's ingenuity, the mariner's compass.

Previously sailors had steered by landmarks. T knew, of course, the stars in their own locality. even the stars disappeared in a storm; and a ship in peril whenever driven beyond sight of land, or yond landlocked seas.

The development by European mariners of a c pass satisfactory for the sea (an achievement quite ferent from the discovery of the principle) transfor the art of navigation. It broke the ancient bond

the land; it prepared the way for the discovery of erica; it changed the face of the earth in half a cen- y.

And the compass in essence did one thing: it took point of reference from outside the ship and put inside the ship. That simple change changed sea- nship. It made the sailing of the seas no longer unguided hazard, but now a well directed venture.

Remember, then, this illuminating fact. Mariners re first prepared for freedom, they first were fitted seek a new world when they had found an inward uivalent for the outward reference; when they had rned, in a phrase that Fosdick has used, to "put nething inside the ship to sail by."

'SOMETHING INSIDE TO SAIL BY'

Therein is a parable of human life. For in human e the one essential to real freedom, the one necessity ich makes freedom not "an unguided dash of self- pression" but a well directed venture, is to have nething inside the ship to sail by.

Consider the pertinence of this suggestion to the in- vidual. In the early stages of life, direction, of cessity, comes from outside. The young child is ght at home, at school, at church, everywhere, that ere are restraints to conduct which must be ob- rved. "Tell Harry," a father called back from the te one summer morning, "that he can mow the lawn is morning if he feels like it." A moment later came second call. "Tell him," the father added, "that he d better feel like it." The young child acts under thority. And, sheltered in a good home and within e sustaining traditions of a decent society, he may ow up to follow without difficulty the well marked annels.

But with a change of scene, loss of family, coming age, he may move out into new seas. He may go to e city, the factory, the army. He may find himself st of Suez where the best is as the worst. Instead resting at shelter in the old harbor, or moving com- fortably by the old landmarks, he must set his own course where darkness is about and there are no hori- zons save the shifting seas. How will he navigate then? It will depend on whether he has something *inside* the ship to sail by.

That comes home to us all; for wherever we live it will remain true that the most important regions of our life are those in which we set our own course, and are kept to it by our own compulsions.

UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS

There are, for example, no fixed points of reference for friendship or neighborliness. The employer may have dictated to him what wages he shall pay, and the employee what hours he shall work. But the friend, the neighbor, has no outward instruction as to what time he shall give or what service he may properly be expected to render. Yet when a person is in trouble, what true friend ever thinks he is doing enough! The mark of the sincere friend, the good neighbor, is will- ingness, like that of Desdemona, who held it a vice in her goodness not to do more than was requested.

When one turns to the New Testament, one finds Jesus saying that the servant who does simply the things which are commanded is an unprofitable servant. Not, says Jesus, till his willingness overflows his obli- gation can a man be even a commendable servant. And this judgment agrees with the constant judgment of Jesus. He always looked at the compass of the ship. He was always concerned, not with the things that came under the outward direction of the law, but with the things that came under the inward discipline of the spirit. You hear him emphasize not murder but hatred, not adultery but lust, not perjury but insin- cerity. He said in vivid metaphor, "cleanse the *inside* of the cup." Indeed, it has been well put that the essential message of Jesus was that of the inwardness of religion. Jesus knew how necessary it is to have something inside the ship to sail by.

Here then is a special word to those coming up to

A Pastoral Prayer

By Henry Hitt Crane

NFINITE GOD, we pray for peace—enduring, creative, positive peace, and we would not pray upidly, ambiguously, self-contradictorily. Forgive us, O God, for the sins of omission as well as commission hereby we allow conditions to be created which in- vitably grow into controversy and conflict.

Make us to realize that peace is not some state of ell-being, arbitrarily superimposed upon us from bove, but rather that it is simply the fulfilling of those onditions which we, Thy children here on earth, do urselves create.

Remembering that this universe which Thou hast reated is utterly law-abiding, may we never fail to ecognize the inexorable nature of Thy teaching that hatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap; that what we prepare for, that we inevitably get; and that, therefore, when we prepare for war, no matter how noble our intention nor how successful our self-decep- tion, the result is always war.

Grant us courage sufficient to tackle the titanic prob- lem of overcoming evil with good. Lift us above the battle of the brute, teach us how to fight the eternal warfare of the spirit, using only those means which are consonant with the ends we profess to seek.

Give us the wisdom, O God, to discern the fact that only as we obey Thy will and follow the way of Thy Son, loving Thee with all our hearts, mind and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves, will we ever bring into being the peace we so devoutly desire.

In the Master's name we pray our prayer. Amen.

years of manhood and womanhood, and looking out toward wider freedoms. In the past you have lived chiefly under direction. You have been brought up, perhaps, in a good home. You have been taught respect for law and all proper authority. You know the place in life of the outward references.

You know also how meager is that existence lived only within these narrow channels. The great sagas of exciting living have ever been found in some high adventure out in the unsheltered waters.

But even to seek a great goal is insufficient. As the early sailors knew that it was but invitation to disaster to head out to the open sea without a compass, so you know that it is invitation to disaster to head out into life without a compass. Thomas Henry Huxley said that a man's worst difficulties begin when he is free to do as he pleases. If you would transform freedom from an unguided hazard to a well directed venture, you must have something inside the ship to sail by.

You have witnessed in Germany how perilous it is to have no references save those from outside. In Germany ten years ago unnumbered thousands of young people were living and moving in conventional channels, decent enough in a decent community. But they followed without question when the nazis marked new channels. They had no compass to steer an independent course. They had no inward reference. They lacked precisely what a great German of another day possessed when he said: "Here I stand! I can do no other! So help me God."

We used to hear it said that the problem of the new generation was to get satisfactorily adjusted, well integrated. It was a dangerous belief. A new generation in Germany became adjusted with fatal ease, and integrated with tragic consequence. The world needs a generation of youth who can, when necessary, be militantly unadjusted, whose skill it will be not merely to align with smoothness the tiller of a boat in tow, but through the stormy watch to keep the ship to the compass point.

A CHALLENGE TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Have *you a* compass within the ship? Can you set your chosen course and keep to it despite the storm? Have you thought over your own best heritage, your finest traditions, your highest standards, your inviolable loyalties: the immediate loyalties to your service or your profession; the larger loyalties to truth, faith, God?

"Daniel," says the record, "purposed in his heart that he would serve the Lord." Have you so set your course? You would do well to set it now, so that in the days ahead, when you take the tiny craft of your own life from the sheltered harbor to the open waters, when the vast tides from alien deeps run their wide and treacherous ways, when the storms from the north make the heart stand still, when in some hour of bitter testing the night is blackness unrelieved, there will be a light about the compass when there are no stars above the sea, and that craft—perhaps with rent sail and shattered deck—will remain not the drifting flotsam of wind and tide, but the instrument of well directed venture, because she is self-directed and they are n

Think then upon "the way of a ship in the mi of the sea." And as the Blue Peter is flying in wind, and you are about to bid the old harbor good- remember that out in the open waters you will n something inside the ship to sail by.

If one deep loyalty, the loyalty to Jesus Christ, truth and his way, becomes the lodestone of your l you will never lack the mystic power that touches compass needle and keeps it true.

Out of Focus

A Sermon for Children by Carl S. Weist

THERE is much to learn about a kodak bef one knows how to take good pictures, but th is one thing that is most important. It is this: i want to get a clear picture I must focus; that is must select some one thing in front of me, and set lens to take that. If I were to try to take all of y at the same time I would not get any one of you v clearly. If I focus on those farther away, those n me will be blurred.

Here are two prints. One is blurred because one who took the picture did not focus on one thi The other is clear: one object was selected.

This blurred film is like the lives of some boys a girls. They are not in focus. They never select so one worth-while thing to do and do it. They co home from school and soon everything is blurred. Th have homework; but there are parties, coasting, cr word puzzles and football, and well—when the is over nothing worth while has been done.

Once there were three brothers who set out to m an engine. Growing tired of that after a time, t thought they would try to make a wagon. A bicy came next, and finally they ended up by making crooked stick.

Do you remember the story of the rich young ma He was good-looking, lovable, courteous, well thou of in his community. "One thing thou lackest," Je said to him. What was it? Focus. He had a g kodak and a good lens, but his picture was blurr He had never centered all the good things he h on the accomplishing of one worthy object. Wh Jesus asked him to be his disciple the young man w home with a sad heart.

One evening, some years ago, a young boy knee in the shadow of a church in New York and pray Arising from his knees, he went out to help the wo That was the great purpose of his life. He focu on one thing. Jacob Riis always had a clear picture what he wanted to do. As a result he helped to cl up Mulberry Bend and did many other splen things.

If you would have a clean-cut, clear picture, focus one great object. Let that one aim be to live the k of life that Jesus lived. If you do that, the pict of your life will not be out of focus or blurred; it v be clear and beautiful.

Sermon Outlines *from* PULPIT Readers

Christianity Save ilization?

Introduction—While we might agree with H. G. Wells in his ement that we now face almost parable disaster if not the extinc- of our species, we will certainly e that we have lost our way, we bewildered, we are in the throes a terrific upheaval the magnitude which cannot be estimated. The le depicts our plight. God said, t there be light"; but "men love kness rather than light, because ir deeds are evil." God said, "It good and pleasant for brethren to ell together in unity"; but we lift our hands against our brothers in petition and strife. God said, eace be within thy walls and pros- ity within thy palaces"; but we are muddle-headed to mind his mean- , and so confusion becomes worse ifounded. What can we do about Can the church encircle the world th strong arms of compassion and ld it steady in this hour of uncer- nty and suffering? We can if we ll. But let us look at some of the ces of disintegration.

II. Body of Sermon. (1) One of se evil forces is *racism*. Someone s said that people are thinking today t with their minds but with their od. Instead of developing a "con- ousness of kind" we have developed exaggerated consciousness of race; d riots, pogroms and unspeakable uelties have resulted. Business is metimes more brotherly for busi- ss' sake than religion is for human- 's sake and God's sake. As for the urch — there are cities where a egro can go into a white man's store d buy what he wishes, but he can- t go into a white man's church to orship God. We Christians do not ally believe, by our actions, that God ath made of one blood all nations men." A church that excludes any ass excludes Christ. A church that n't big enough for all God's children n't big enough for God.

(2) Another force that is tearing r world to pieces is *false national- m*. It has set the world on fire. The triotic impulse is a splendid thing hen constructively directed, but it is dangerous thing when directed by magogues and professional patri- eers. But the era of anarchistic tional sovereignties is gone forever. we do not have sense enough to ganize the world for peace and otherhood, another Hitler will or- nize it again for destruction. For itler was a product of the world e have produced. He was a symp- m, indicating that our society is sick unto death, sick of selfishness and sin, of greed and hypocrisy, of provincial- ism and chauvinism. There is no future for us worth possessing unless we are willing to pay the price of Christianizing our civilization. It is either the way of Christ or the way of disaster.

Other economic and cultural forces contributing to strife and confusion might be mentioned, but let us simply say that any man who builds barriers to brotherhood is building against God and is undermining our civilization.

Now let us ask, "How can Christianity save civilization?" (1) First, we must *care*. We must be hurt with our brother's hurts; must be hungry when he is hungry; must suffer in his suffering. W. E. Hocking says that religion is a passion for righteousness conceived as cosmic demand. If your religion does not become a flaming passion in your soul it isn't religion; it may be a philosophy or ethics, but not a religion. How much do we care? How deeply are we stirred? How much of the world's suffering have we taken on our hearts? How much do we care that multitudes are living in superstition and ignorance, their lives ravaged by hunger and fear? If we had the spirit of Christ, all this would haunt us. How much do we care?

(2) Second, we must *share*. Sympathy is not enough. Bishop Welch tells of the suffering of the Chinese who have been driven from their homes by the Japanese invader. He tells us that a dollar a month will save a Chinese from starvation. Have you thought of taking a dollar a month from your food budget for this cause? How much does the World Service enterprise of the Methodist Church mean to us? One would think that we could give a penny a day. But we don't do that. Iowa Methodists, for instance, give about one-seventh of a cent per day to our far-flung World Service enterprise. Brethren, God can never build a Christian world out of that kind of "devotion." Let us consider this: What puny efforts we Christians are making to save the world in comparison with what is being spent to destroy it! Devastating wars think in billions; our gospel, as we practice it, thinks in pennies and dimes. We must learn to share.

(3) Finally, we must lift the world up to God in *prayer*. We must keep alive the sense of fellowship with the Eternal. God still rules; we believe that, and we are optimistic. Our optimism is grounded in God, not based on newspaper and radio reports. Our God has not been pushed from his throne by evil forces. He is an ongoing God who never quits. The task ahead is too big for men, but together with God we can build the kind of world he wants for his children. A God-led, God-empowered Christianity can save civilization. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world."

III. Conclusion—An old letter comes down to us from the second century, the Epistle to Diognetus, in which the writer says of the Christians of his day, "They hold the world together." Can we hold the world together? Can Christianity save civilization? We can if we will. There are enough Christians in the world to save the world—if only we are Christian enough.

(G. S. Nichols, Collegiate Methodist Church, Ames, Iowa)

The New Loyalty

LET US no more be true to boasted race and clan,
But to our highest dream, the brotherhood of man.
Shall Babel walls of greed and selfishness divide?
Shall not the love of friends illume the patriot's pride?
For moated arsenals let shrines of art atone;
Where armies met in blood, let garden plots be sown.
Let royal hunting grounds be parceled out anew,
That little children's feet may know the grass and dew.

No more shall Mammon play with pawns of toiling men,
No more shall blood be spilled that Greed may count its gain.
Let patience be our power and sympathy our court,
With love our only law and faith our only fort.
New thoughts, new hopes, new dreams, new starry worlds to scan,
As Time proclaims the dawn, the brotherhood of man.

Thomas Curtis Clark.

'When the Boys Come Home'

By Charles M. Crowe

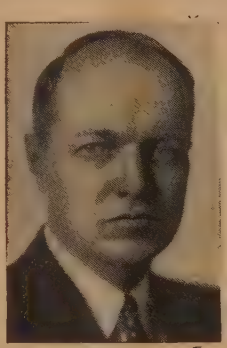
WHEN the boys come home—and they are now returning—we will be threatened with the greatest crime wave in the history of the nation, said Leland Stowe when he was in St. Louis a few weeks ago. This distinguished war correspondent, lately returned from the western front, went on to say that he found to his dismay that behind the front lines the American soldiers were the most undisciplined and immoral of any of the armies of nine different nations with which he has worked during the war. Mr. Stowe stated that officers and men of our forces showed the least respect for their uniform and for the common decencies of life of all fighting men he had known. He declared that the drunkenness and carousing and the general disregard of life and property exhibited by our men were too noticeable and on too large a scale to disregard. He predicted that the return of our men will bring a large number of potential criminals and stated that serious measures must be taken to cope with the problem.

The illustrations that Mr. Stowe gave to document his statements indicated unmistakably that alcoholic beverages were largely responsible for this fearful condition among our men. Many army and navy chaplains who have seen service overseas and with whom I have talked personally relate the same story and make the same predictions. And a friend of mine connected with an international relief organization recently told me that General Eisenhower cabled the New York office of the organization that the morale among our soldiers behind the lines was very bad. All of which portends dire consequences for our postwar life at home.

● *Some Startling Figures*

But we should not be surprised at this situation. Figures recently released by the U. S. Department of Commerce showed that the American people spent more than seven billion dollars for alcoholic beverages in 1944, an all-time high. The government figures showed that we are now spending for liquors about $54 per year for every man, woman, child and infant in the country. In August 1944 and again in January 1945, a month's so-called holiday from war work was granted distillers in order to manufacture in each month 54 million gallons of 190 proof beverage spirits. Since this will be cut to half strength when marketed, they piled up in those two months a year and a half's supply of hard liquors.

It is obvious that the liquor business is one business that is not suffering from the war. Indeed, the *Beverage Times,* New York trade paper of the liquor industry, declared in the issue of February 5, 1945, after the release of what they called the "seven billion dollar blunder" by the Department of Commerce, that due to the work of the industry's paid lobby the liquor industry has come through World War II relatively "unscathed." Any industry as non-essential and as



C. M. Crowe

detrimental as the liquor industry that boasts of coming through the war unscathed by means of legislative trickery deserves to be branded as Public Enemy No. 1.

It is obvious also that the business is making good its hopes as expressed in the *Brewers' Digest* in 1941: "One of the finest things that could have happened to the brewing industry was the insistence by high ranking officers to make beer available at army camps." "Here is a chance for brewers to cultivate a taste for beer in millions of young men who will eventually constitute the largest beer consuming section of our population." Well, they have certainly done that and with a vengeance, as Mr. Stowe and General Eisenhower can testify.

Friends of the liquor trade say we should not discuss the problems of alcohol while the boys are away. Well, when the boys do come home we will have to tell them that the very year they needed equipment and nitions the most, 1944, Americ were spending enough on liquor have bought 20 battleships, 20 plane carriers, 10,000 heavy bom and much other equipment. Th are many rows of crosses on the tlefields of the world today bec the money, men and materials to m munitions to end the war were squ dered in drink.

● *Ration Program D Not Touch Liq*

When the boys come home will want to know why the one touchable sacred cow of the w ration program was the liquor in try.

In 1943 one and one-half mil tons of grain, a million tons of f and 70,000 tons of sugar were in the preparation of alcoholic dri This grain alone would have fed 303,000 soldiers for an entire yea the rate of five and one-half pou per day per soldier. In August 1 during the holiday to which I re red, the distillers of hard liquor sumed 560 million pounds of grai a time when the housewives w being urged to do without. would have fed five million of world's starving for six months. L wise, according to *Tap & Taver* trade journal, in the one month November 1944 a total of 115 mil pounds of edible grains and 17 mil pounds of sugar, not to mention million pounds of other mater went into the preparation of beer malt beverages.

The manpower shortage in es tial industries is acute, yet thous of men and women are used to tribute whisky, wine and beer, w drink-caused absenteeism (estim to be 11 per cent of the total) is ing the nation the equivalent of labor of a million men. The Secretary of War Knox declared week-end dissipation was the serious cause of absenteeism am war workers.

Railroads are overburdened, portant convention travel is stricted, but the railroads are tr porting millions of tons of alcoh beverages taking space that is nee by war necessities.

Rubber tires are scarce and stricted and gasoline is rationed, w thousands of truckloads of intoxic pass daily over the highways streets. About a year ago rub director Bradley Dewey declared

greatest threat to synthetic rub- production was the shortage of hol.

● *Alcohol Retards the War*

The *New York Herald Tribune* ently declared that months after old clothes collection for Greece rly 2,400,000 pounds of clothing e piled up in a New York ware- se because of lack of shipping ce. Strangely enough, however, or shipments have no trouble ching the armed forces.

When our boys come home we can them one reason they have had ight in Europe. In 1925 the famed nch editor, Payot, wrote: "Alco- ism, under the indifferent eye of authorities, is indeed destroying nation." The warning was not ded. When the French disaster ured early in this war, the offi- l verdict of the French government s: "Alcoholism was the chief cause the French army's collapse, and the rst of France's four great prob- ns." To which General Petain him- f added this woeful refrain: "Our diers were drunk and could not ht." So France drank her way to feat.

By way of contrast, and in view the powerful success of Russian ns, consider these words by Val- tina Coy Mitz, a Ukranian, lec- ring in this country: "In Russia if woman offers a soldier liquor she s to serve six months in prison. she gives it to him she is shot. ere can be no drinking while the ar is on, for men must be strong, althy and fully possessed of every it of their strength and ability." What do our military officers say this point? One of them, Brig. en. Henry J. Reilly, said some time o: "Morale is more important than orals to the soldier. Leave the orale to the army, and to (Hades) ith morals. Some people want to ep the young soldier from women d liquor. That's what he needs."

● *The Number One Health Problem*

When the boys come home we must eigh well the terrific toll alcohol is king in our society. It will be ajor postwar problem.

One leading medical authority de- ared that the four most serious ealth problems in this country are this order: alcohol, tuberculosis, ancer, heart trouble. One of our rge insurance companies reports that uring the past ten years rejection or heavy alcoholic indulgence have ıcreased from 12 to 34 per cent.

Psychiatrists are much concerned bout the increasing burdens which ısanity is placing on the personnel nd finances of the nation. More eds are occupied by insane patients han by all others combined. Dr. Dayton, working with the Rockefeller Foundation, reported that 20 per cent of the mental patients in the United States are alcoholics. In some cities and states the percentage is much higher. Forty per cent of admissions at Bellevue Hospital are alcoholics and 32 per cent at Massachusetts General Hospital.

● *Liquor and Crime*

The cost of alcohol to the nation in the form of crime is almost beyond comprehension. Dr. H. M. Pollock, mental hygiene statistician for the New York State Board of Health, estimates that the economic loss to the nation of those who drink, in the form of extra costs for police, jails, courts, hospitals, accidents and the like comes to 10 billion dollars annually. Arrests for drunkenness increased from 831 per 100,000 population in 1932 (the last year of prohibition) to 2,563 per 100,000 in 1942, and they are increasing. Dr. Lawrence Kolb, assistant surgeon general, states that intemperance today figures as one of the causes of crime in the cases of 50 per cent of convicted criminals and the sole cause in 16 per cent.

Judge J. T. Zottoli, of the Municipal Court of Boston, revealed in a recent study that 90 per cent of the adults incarcerated in Massachusetts for misdemeanors were there for offenses caused by liquor and half the inhabitants of the penal institutions of the state got there by the same route.

Liquor is at the basis of much of our juvenile delinquency. J. Edgar Hoover, of the FBI, states that in 1942 30 per cent more boys under 21 were arrested for drunkenness than in the previous year—and 39 per cent more girls for the same reason; and the rate is increasing. The Chicago Juvenile Protective Association reported that 60 per cent of all complaints received by it in 1944 concerned illegal conditions in places selling liquor and 70 per cent of such complaints involved minors.

In the matter of traffic accidents, the National Safety Council declares that "alcohol is responsible for between 40 per cent and 60 per cent of all death and injury accidents caused by automobiles on our highways. It is the No. 1 traffic safety problem."

We shall ask our boys: Is that the kind of society and freedom you are fighting for?

● *Answering the Arguments*

Now every plea of the defenders of liquor is false. The plea of personal freedom is usually a mask for self-indulgence. It is an empty argument in face of the fact that liquor is the No. 1 moral problem of men: it is a major factor in crooked politics, commercialized vice, crime, insanity, delinquency, divorce. That personal freedom be subordinated to the common good is a fundamental of democracy.

The plea that you can't legislate goodness and therefore you dare not touch liquor by law is also specious argument. Laws against murder do not stop murder, but we do not repeal the law. Laws against the dope traffic do not keep men from indulging, but we do not repeal the law. Laws against gambling do not make men honest, but we keep the laws.

The plea that to control liquor would increase men's desire for it is likewise ridiculous. Why, then, do the brewers and distillers spend vast amounts in advertising? Why do they not support prohibition? According to this argument they would then sell more. Hat makers don't tell women they cannot buy hats in order to increase their desire for hats.

● *An Issue of Postwar Planning*

The plea that alcohol is good for nutritional and medicinal purposes is also specious. The next edition of *U. S. Pharmacopoea,* revised every ten years by physicians, omits whisky from the listing.

In spite of all this, when anyone says a word aaginst the liquor traffic he is regarded as a long-haired reformer and an impossible idealist. This ought not be. Here is a major evil and a major national problem. In our postwar planning for a better America when the boys come home here is a serious issue that cannot be evaded by men of faith if the ideals they have been fighting for are to be realized among us.

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• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

REV. VINCENT J. FLYNN was ordained to the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church in 1927. He spent several years in the study and teaching of English, chiefly in St. Thomas College, St. Paul, Minn., and its military academy. In 1940 he was appointed head of the English department, College of St. Thomas, and last year he became president of the college and academy. Father Flynn is the Catholic co-chairman of the executive committee for the north central region of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. His sermon in this issue was preached at the commencement exercises of the University of Minnesota last spring.

Rev. IRVIN E. LUNGER *is minister of the University* Church of Disciples of Christ, Chicago. His higher education was received at Bethany College, at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, and at the University of Chicago, where he was awarded a Ph.D. degree.

Rev. WESNER FALLAW *is director of religious education* in the Winnetka (Ill.) Congregational Church.

For eight years Rev. HAROLD W. RUOPP *was professor* of the art and history of preaching at Boston University School of Theology and since 1939 has ministered at Central Church, Chicago. He is also president of the Church Federation of Greater Chicago. In his preaching and in his homiletic writing Dr. Ruopp has stressed th importance of the "life situation" approach.

From 1925 to 1932 Rev. THOMAS H. NEWCOM was pastor of the First United Presbyterian Church Buffalo, N. Y., and for the past thirteen years has min istered at the Eighth U. P. Church in Pittsburgh. He president of the Standing Committee on Education of th General Assembly of his denomination.

Since 1935 Rev. ERNEST M. HOWSE *has been min* ister of Westminster United Church, Winnipeg, Manitob His first pastorate was at Beverly Hills Presbyteria Church, Calif. For three years he served as a home mis sionary along the Newfoundland coast. He is chairma of the Canadian National Committee on Refugees, Winn peg branch. He holds a Ph.D. from the University o Edinburgh, Scotland, and an S.T.M. degree from Unio Seminary, New York. For several years he has been o the news staff of the *Christian Century*.

Rev. HENRY HITT CRANE *is minister of Centr* Methodist Church, Detroit, Mich.

Rev. CARL S. WEIST *is minister of the Communit* Church in Mt. Vernon, N. Y.

Rev. CHARLES M. CROWE *is minister of the Ce* tenary Methodist Church, St. Louis, Mo.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

ANDREW P. BURTON, First Baptist, Belvidere, Ill. "What Is God Doing?" 2 Cor. 5:19—". . . God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself."

LESTER A. EHRET, Chaplain, San Francisco, Cal. "Cheer in Strange Places." John 16:33—"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

HERBERT B. HUDNUT, Woodward Ave. Presbyterian, Detroit, Mich. "The Essential Task of Christianity." Matt. 6:33—"Seek God's realm and his goodness."

DURWARD B. BROWN, Central Methodist, Wheeling, W. Va. "The Profit of Pain." Job—"Let me exult in pain that spareth not."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .
Title of sermon

. . . . . .
Text used (write out the text)

. . . . . .
Name of minister

. . . . . .
Name of church

. . . . . .
Address

DON R. BRANDON, First Presbyterian, Welch, W. V "The Challenge of the Christ." Heb. 3:1—". . . f your attention on Jesus."

DONALD J. SELBY, First Baptist, Garden City, Ka "When Life Seems Futile." Mark 14:8—"She hath do what she could."

DUNBAR H. OGDEN, JR., First Presbyterian, Staunton, V "Lest We Forget." Deut. 8:11—"Beware lest tho forget the Lord thy God."

BROWNE BARR, South Congregational, Middletown, Con "The Undaunted Compassion of God." Hos. 3:1— ". . . even as Jehovah loveth the children of Israe though they turn unto other gods."

HERBERT W. HAHN, Methodist, South Bethlehem, N. Y "The Pre-eminence of Christ." Col. 1:18—"And he the head of the body, the church . . . that in all thing he might have the pre-eminence."

M. D. BUSH, Methodist, Wall Lake, Ia. "Below an Above the Skyline." Rev. 2:10b—"Be thou faithfu unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

ROBERT G. REITER, St. Paul Lutheran, Newville, P "Where Is Your Citizenship?" Phil. 3:20a—"For ou citizenship is in heaven."

B. ROY BROWN, First Methodist, Schaller, Ia. "Co tented Captive." Phil. 3:12—". . . I have been ca tured by Jesus Christ."

FRANCIS M. HALL, Cleveland, O. "The Gospel Must B Rediscovered." 2 Cor. 13:5—"Test yourselves to s if you are in the faith." (Moffatt)

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

S I write, President Truman is sitting at a table in Potsdam beside Joseph Stalin and Winston Churchill. They are discussing the grave ques- s which the war has thrown into tragic relief and ch must be settled if we are to have not only peace but tolerable world order. No- body knows precisely what these questions are, but anyone can guess what some of them are. ey have to do with the treatment of the conquered liberated peoples of Europe, with the settlement boundaries, with certain geographical "hot spots" n as Trieste, the Middle East and the Dardanelles, h the attitude of Stalin toward Russia's participation he Japanese war, with what price he will exact for n participation, and with postwar lend-lease or right loans from the U. S. A. to Russia and Great tain. President Truman is new to this kind of onsibility, but he has taken along an entourage of npetent advisers and has at his command the Ameri- generals who have fought the European war. Be- s, he carried with him the more nearly united port and good will of the American people than . Roosevelt brought to any of the preceding con- nces. With the Japanese facing utter ruin, I would be surprised if Mr. Stalin has brought with him ne proposals looking toward the ending of the war the Pacific. Our people await the outcome of these versations with mingled feelings of hope and anxi- coupled with a kind of fatalistic willingness to ept the result, whatever it may be.

e Parley of the g Three

The Book of the Month

INKING WHERE JESUS THOUGHT, *by Hillyer H. Straton. The Bethany Press. $2.00.*

WHETHER this is a book of sermont or a volume of essays, I do not know. If essays, each one is a sermon. And if sermons, they the kind of sermons the present generation of ristians needs to hear. I hope, therefore, that they re actually preached. They deal with live questions l with the big questions which every preacher should ely discuss. Dr. Straton shows in every chapter his niliarity with a field of scholarship which all too few us know much about. Strange to say, it is the New stament! Too many of us merely take texts from New Testament, but fail to grasp the broader truth ich underlies the context. Modern scholarship is ing us a *new* New Testament. It has raised prob- ns for the student which were not even consciously ined a generation ago. This is especially true of the pels. The author takes a conservative interpretation the findings of this scholarship. But it is good to ow that these findings are capable of a conservative erpretation! Whether you agree with him or not, in any specific matter, the mere fact that he knows what scholars have to say invests his preaching with an authority it could not otherwise have. Dr. Straton is a Baptist minister who has taken an active part in current conversations between a Baptist and a Disciples commission looking toward the union of these two bodies. He has formed fine friendships with many Disciples and dedicates his book to thirty of them, whose names he lists. A Disciples' house is his pub- lisher. This is a good omen. But what he says in his book will repay any reader, regardless of his denomina- tion.

A Thought for the Month

EUROPEAN theology coined a new word some years ago for us American Christians. We were called "activists." We were not offended, but rather complimented, by the appellation. Our pride in our amazing achievement in the conquest of a new continent produced the feeling that religion, too, must justify itself in practical results. The practical results that we had in mind took form under the concept of the "social gospel." My lifetime spans the entire period of this American development. I have done my bit in urging upon the churches their social responsibility, and this I shall continue to do so long as I live. But looking back over the years I won- der whether much of our activism has not been a sort of compensation for the lack of profound religious con- viction and understanding. Many of our churches and their leaders have taken the social gospel all too super- ficially. Only a church whose activities are the ex- pression of a profound faith in the eternal gospel is able to bear a Christian witness in the secular order to the social gospel. Lacking such depth and strength of Christian faith, its activity in the secular scene tends to make of it a sort of better government association, or a reform society, on the same level as innumerable organi- zations which lay no claim to religious sanctions. We are now told that, as one result of their wartime ex- perience, European Christians are coming around to an acceptance of our American position which recognizes their responsibility for the character of the public order of the nation and the world. But I think they will still feel that we take this responsibility too superficially— that we act as if it all depends upon us—that we are too humanistic and moralistic. Have we not something to learn from their "quietism," which leaves God with something to do in human affairs? Two texts are re- quired to embrace the whole truth. "Speak unto the children of Israel that they *go forward*"! *"Stand still* and see the salvation of the Lord"!

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Charles Clayton Morrison

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